

CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS OFFICIALS (CASBO)

Testimony by David G. Lenihan
Public Hearing of the Education Committee
March 4, 2013

Representative Fleischman, Senator Stillman and members of the Education Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on HB 6507 (An Act Concerning a Sliding Tuition Scale for Preschool Programs Offered at Interdistrict Magnet School Programs)

My name is David G. Lenihan and I am the legislative liaison for the Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO). I am also a retired Business Manager with over 14 years of experience in this field and a past president of CASBO. CASBO is a non-profit trade organization that represents school business officials in almost all of the 169 towns in Connecticut.

SBOs work closely with School Boards, administrators, staff, public officials and communities and are responsible for most aspects of school business and operations. This includes, but not limited to, developing and monitoring school district budgets. In this time of very limited financial resources, careful budget development remains more critical than ever. Unfunded mandates obviously are a real concern to all towns and Boards of Education.

CASBO fully supports HB6507 that amends PA12-1 by removing the requirement that local or regional schools pay the tuition for preschool programs. PA12-1 had placed an undue and inconsistent burden on certain school districts to pay for magnet school tuition for children in preschool programs that they are not otherwise responsible for educating. Connecticut statutes do not require that school districts provide or support preschool programs for resident students. This new unfunded mandate is estimated over \$ 3million and applies to 55 public school districts in CT or about 33% .

HB 6507 corrects this unfair burden while at the same time provides for the development of a sliding tuition scale based on family income. This is a fair way to determine tuition paid by parents for these preschool programs. This proposed bill is consistent with the practice that parents are responsible for preschool programs.

In summary, we applaud the efforts of this bill by developing a fair tuition scale for parents while removing the unfair burden on certain boards of education to pay for students they are not otherwise responsible for educating, especially where such boards are unable to afford to provide preschool opportunities for their own resident students.